SOULTRANE

JOHN COLTRANE PRESTIGE 7142

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JOHN COLTRANE with RED GARLAND

JOHN COLTRANE, tenor sax
RED GARLAND, piano
PAUL CHAMBERS, bass
ARTHUR TAYLOR, drums

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1. GOOD BAIT
2. I WANT TO TALK ABOUT YOU
3. YOU SAY YOU CARE
4. THEME FOR ERNIE
5. RUSSIAN LULLABY

When reading **The New Yorker,** usually, I am most amused by an S. J. Perelman gem, the cartoons or something in **The Talk Of The Town.** In the May 17, 1958 issue, however, it was the jazz department that gave me my biggest guffaw when Whitney Balliett, in the course of reviewing a Miles Davis album, wrote, "Coltrane, a student of Sonny Rollins . . .". Of course, we know he didn't mean that Trane was going to Sonny's house, armed with a Klose book, for weekly lessons but the implication was clear, in this perfunctory dismissal, that Coltrane was indebted to Rollins for his style.

It is true that when Coltrane joined Miles Davis' quintet in late 1955, Sonny (the Rollins of that time and slightly before) was exerting a peripheral influence over him. Even this proved to be transient. The influences of Dexter Gordon (vintage 1946), Sonny Stitt, Stan Getz (certain facets of sound) and a general essence of Charlie Parker were more evident, even then. Since that time, Trane has developed along personal lines to become quite an influence himself. He and Sonny are parallel figures now, each contributing new ideas to jazz in his own way.

Soultrane is a ballad, written by Tadd Dameron, which appears on **Mating Call** (Prestige 7070 — an album which features Coltrane and Dameron). This album, called **Soultrane,** does not include that tune but Prestige thought the name an apt one for an entire collection of Coltrane because it plays on his name in a truly descriptive way.

Trane is very serious about his playing; playing jazz is what he is most concerned with. There is a constant effort, on his part, to keep improving. He is self-critical and helpfully, because of clear insight, self-analytical. Practice is not foreign to him.

As in his last album (7123), Trane has the support of Red Garland, Paul Chambers and Arthur Taylor. These four have done much playing together. In this case, familiarity breeds rapport.

Another admirable facet is duplicated from the last album. That is the playing of seldom-done tunes. 7123 had **Soft Lights And Sweet Music, You Leave Me Breathless** and Alonzo Levister's **Slow Dance.** In **Soultrane,** none of the selections have been overdone and three are entirely new to jazz interpretation.

The opening selection is an exploration, at length, of **Good Bait,** a Tadd Dameron-Count Basie collaboration, first recorded by Dizzy Gillespie in the Forties. The way Trane plays the little turns in the melody gives it a slight minuet flavor. The excitement he builds in his choruses is done by degrees. The solos by Garland and Chambers (pizzicato) are in the same firm, solid groove that the rhythm section sets down for the entire performance. Before the theme is re-stated, Trane and Arthur Taylor have a most intelligent, four bar-styled conversation.

I Want To Talk About You is a ballad, written and originally recorded by Billy Eckstine when B was leading his band in the mid-Forties. To my knowledge, this extremely pretty song had not been done since until now. This is how to play a ballad with jazz feeling. Trane is emotional but never baroque. Garland's languid, blue piano and other excellent picked solo by Chambers enhance the romantic mood.

Side two opens with a Joe Stein-Leo Robin tune, **You Say You Care,** which I have never heard before in a jazz context. Trane makes the most of the interesting chord changes in a swinging, medium-up setting. Garland's fluid single-line and Chambers' flying fingers are also featured before the final theme statement.

Theme For Ernie is a dedicatory piece by Philadelphian Freddie Lacey to Ernie Henry, the ex-Gillespie alto saxophonist who died suddenly in December of 1957 at the age of thirty-one. Trane plays the lament without much deviation from the melody but imbues it with an air of reminiscence and melancholy. Red and Trane divide the last chorus.

Red begins **Russian Lullaby** with an out-of-tempo introduction before Trane comes ripping in. Taking this and **Soft Lights And Sweet Music** as evidence, it would seem that the boys like to play their Irving Berlin at high velocity. I'm sure this **Lullaby** would keep Nikita

awake and swinging all night. Trane's "sheets of sound", which he has since put to wider use, are demonstrated in the beginning of the tag.

notes by IRA GITLER
supervision by Bob Weinstock
recording by Van Gelder

The portion of John Coltrane's career that has brought him to prominence (from 1955 to 1958, during which time he has been with Miles Davis' quintet, Thelonious Monk's quartet, a co-op group with Lou Donaldson, Donald Byrd, Red Garland and Arthur Taylor, and again with Miles Davis — this time in the sextet) has been well documented on Prestige.

Mating Call (7070), **Coltrane** (7105) and **John Coltrane With The Red Garland Trio** (7123) are all extensive representations of Trane. He also plays a prominent role in **Miles** (7014), **Cookin'** (7094), **Relaxin'** (7129) (these three with Miles Davis); **Tenor Madness** (7047), **Two Tenors** (7043), **Tenor Conclave** (7074), **Mal-2** (7111), **Interplay** (7112), **Taylor's Wailers** (7117), **All Mornin' Long** (7130), **Wheelin' And Dealin'** (7131), **The Big Sound** (7132) and **Baritones And French Horn** (16-6). The latter is available only on 16rpm at present.

The rhythm section of Garland, Chambers and Taylor is heard, as a trio, on **A Garland Of Red** (7064), **Red Garland's Piano** (7086), **Groovy** (7113) and **Manteca** (7139).